




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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**VICTIMS OF CRIME ASSISTANCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
BILL; BAIL (DOMESTIC VIOLENCE) AND ANOTHER ACT AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services and Minister for Corrective Services) (12.26 am): I rise to contribute to the debate. Firstly, I strongly support the measures that deliver better and safer outcomes for victims of domestic and family violence. Since the *Not now, not ever* report, the Palaszczuk government has worked collaboratively across departments and with service providers to implement the recommendations of that report. The report was emphatic in the need to protect victims and hold perpetrators to account.

Many of the recommendations of the report relate to improvements to the criminal justice system and challenge the way we as a community view domestic and family violence. It is undisputed in a lot of cases that the only way to ensure a victim's ongoing safety is to keep an accused perpetrator in custody. Current legislation provides avenues for the justice system to remand in custody those who present an unacceptable risk to the community. The decision about what is or is not unacceptable goes to the very heart of domestic and family violence to protect those in need and the cultural change that we as a Queensland community must effect.

Domestic violence takes many forms. Risks can rapidly escalate or de-escalate and assessing future risk can be challenging for all involved. We know and understand the distress that victims and families endure through pursuing justice. This is a burden acutely shared by those in the justice system and integrated response providers who strive to deliver support.

For matters of domestic violence, the risk of further domestic violence is at the core of deciding an unacceptable risk. Police are now, more than ever, working closely with other departments and the domestic violence sector to share information so officers can better understand the dynamics of domestic violence and how risk manifests itself in particular cases. The information held by service providers and the views of victims and their families can better inform decisions about assessing bail risk more effectively than a predetermined list of offence types.

While notification of a bail decision is an important component of providing support to a victim, it is not by itself sufficient to discharge a community's responsibility. Many people rely on mobile telephones or devices to stay in touch, but it is not unusual for victims of domestic violence to frequently change their address or phone numbers in an effort to avoid the perpetrator. Sending a victim an electronic message about a bail decision does not go far enough. This is why the victims of crime assistance bill creates a charter of victim's rights to ensure that victims are informed of bail conditions and, importantly, that arrangements and support services are put in place to ensure a victim's safety.

It is vital that the Queensland Police Service's responsibility to notify victims of bail conditions is part of an integrated response with other service providers which also include explaining options and providing assistance and support so victims can make decisions about their own safety. We all need to ensure that we continue to work collectively and closely together so that we can deliver workable and valuable safeguards to victims and families of domestic and family violence. While I have the

opportunity, I acknowledge the good work of the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Corrective Services in assisting people who are experiencing domestic and family violence. Those officers in both the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Corrective Services have a very tough job, and they work every single day to ensure they respond to the needs of people in our community, particularly people in our community experiencing domestic and family violence.

The Queensland Police Service is leading the way when it comes to ensuring that our officers have the best possible skills and training to respond to very difficult, complex instances involving domestic and family violence. Only a few weeks ago along with the Minister for Communities I was able to launch the vulnerable persons training package, which is the biggest training package being delivered to front-line police officers in the history of the Queensland Police Service. Over 11,500 police officers will receive vulnerable persons training to ensure they have the skills, knowledge and awareness to better assist people experiencing domestic and family violence. From the point of view of knowing that the Queensland Police Service not only has highly trained and highly skilled officers but also is a compassionate Police Service, we should be very proud of the work that the Queensland Police Service does every single day in responding to very challenging calls for service in respect of domestic and family violence.

I commend the work of the Attorney-General in respect of the Victims of Crime Assistance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I call on all members of this House to continue the history of this parliament in having a bipartisan approach to responding to the very complex challenge of domestic and family violence here in Queensland. Only by working together can we truly have the cultural change that we need in our community to keep people safe and the best possible laws to ensure that people experiencing domestic and family violence get the assistance and protection they need.